DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

TO: Captain Groder
OP-43 B
Chief of Naval Operations
The Pentagon

FROM: NEA/IAI - David A. Korn

SUBJECT: Negotiations over Compensation in the U.S.S. Liberty Incident

We have been in touch with Mr. Joest, of Naval Sea Systems Command, who has suggested we direct this request to you.

The attached cable from AmEmbassy Tel Aviv indicates the willingness of the Government of Israel to begin negotiations with the U.S. Government over compensation for physical damage to the U.S.S. Liberty. The Israeli diplomatic note quoted in the cable is dated May 25, 1978. Negotiations were deferred until the arrival in Washington of Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. Ephraim Evron, whose personal familiarity with the case should expedite resolution of the matter through informal negotiations in Washington. Subsequent events, including the Camp David conference and the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty negotiations, further postponed consideration of the case.

We are now ready to resume our efforts to conclude this matter. We would appreciate your giving us a statement of Department of the Navy objectives in these negotiations to help us in formulating a mutually agreed U.S. negotiating position.

Attachment:

Tel Aviv 6899, May 31, 1978.

DRAFTED BY: NEA/IAI:TCubbsion:smb
12/10/79 X23672

CLEARED BY: L/NEA:TRamsh (subs)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [illegible] DATE 1/24/83
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE _____
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RELEASE DENIED ☐
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Department of State

INCOMING TELEGRAM

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ACTION TRSE-00

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 EB-08 L-03 OMB-01 JUSE-00
PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
DODE-00 H-02 /063 W

R 311218Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3381

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 6899

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MILI, IS, US
SUBJECT: U.S.S. LIBERTY CLAIM

REF: (A) TEL AVIV 5887 (B) STATE 103865

1. THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING FOREIGN MINISTRY NOTE DATED MAY 25, 1978:

QUOTE.

THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS PRESENTS ITS COMPLIMENTS TO THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND HAS THE HONOUR TO REFER TO THE EMBASSY'S NOTE OF 22 FEBRUARY CONCERNING THE REQUEST FOR COMPENSATION FOR PHYSICAL DAMAGE TO THE U.S.S. LIBERTY.

THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS APPRECIATES THE ACKNOWLEDGMENT BY THE EMBASSY THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL HAS IN FACT SATISFACTORILY COMPENSATED THE VICTIMS OF THE ATTACK AND THEIR SURVIVORS. THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FURTHER SHARES THE COGNIZANCE OF THE CLOSE AND WARM RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS AND THE KNOWLEDGE THAT IT IS IN THE INTEREST OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO SETTLE THIS LONG STANDING DISPUTE.

IN ORDER TO ATTEMPT TO REACH AN AMICABLE SETTLEMENT, WHILE RESERVING ISRAEL'S LEGAL POSITION IN THE MATTER, AN ISRAEL NEGOTIATING TEAM HAS BEEN APPOINTED WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO ENDEAVOUR TO NEGOTIATE SUCH A SETTLEMENT.

WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS TAKE PLACE AT THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN JERUSALEM AND WOULD WELCOME IT IF THE EMBASSY COULD SUGGEST ALTERNATIVE DATES THAT WOULD BE CONVENIENT TO THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVES.

THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AVAILS ITSELF OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RENEW TO THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA THE ASSURANCES

OF ITS HIGHEST CONSIDERATION. END QUOTE.

2. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION TO GOI PROPOSAL THAT NEGOTIATIONS TAKE PLACE IN JERUSALEM AND SUGGESTIONS ON DATES WHICH WE WOULD FIND CONVENIENT. EMBASSY IS PREPARED TO ASSUME MAJOR NEGOTIATING RESPONSIBILITY, IF DEPARTMENT WISHES, PROVIDED THAT WASHINGTON CAN SUPPLY DETAILED NEGOTIATING INSTRUCTIONS PLUS LEGAL AND TECHNICAL TDY ASSISTANCE. PLEASE ADVISE.
LEWIS

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